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Air Vehicles Chief completes executive leadership program

by Melissa Kamada, Air Vehicles Directorate

WRIGHT-PATTERSON AFB, Ohio — Yvette Weber, chief of the technology integration branch of Air Force Research Laboratory's Air Vehicles Directorate, has completed the Department of Defense Executive Leadership Development Program. The program gives civilian and military participants extensive exposure to various service roles and missions, plus increased awareness about today's war fighters.

The 10-month course featured a hands-on approach for 41 civilians and four active duty military officers: crawling through the mud and rappelling in field training, handling weapons safely and jumping from airborne training towers, according to Weber.

Students traveled in aircraft, ships, tanks, submarines and amphibious assault vehicles; ate in mess halls if they were lucky, or got meals-ready-to-eat; and slept in the same kinds of quarters as soldiers, sailors, airmen and Marines.

"The training taught me that if I can rappel down a 40-foot tower, I can take on any challenge," Weber said of the rigorous physical demands of the course. As a high school graduate, Weber wanted to go to West Point Military Academy, but "three seconds on a chin-up bar changed the entire course of my life."

Attendees formed six teams that traveled and worked together during eight deployments, rotating team positions to give every member leadership experience.

Each deployment, which lasted one to two weeks, exposed the teams to different parts of the Defense Department.

"I got to see what my life might have been, and what people in uniform do for us and sacrifice for us everyday," she said. "This opened my eyes to the way that our military forces live."

The teams traveled to such places as Beckley, W.Va., for core curriculum training; Pacific Air Forces Command, Hawaii; San Diego, Calif.; U.S. Forces Korea in Seoul; and numerous Air Force and Navy installations, Army posts, Marine depots and other military sites in the United States.

"ELDP has given me a better understanding of the war fighter," Weber said. "I have eaten with them, trained with them, and heard their concerns. It also has taught me how I contribute as part of the 'total force' in supporting war fighters."



EXECUTIVE LEADERSHIP PROGRAM — Yvette Weber signals "A-OK" from a vehicle assigned to the Marine Corps Assault Amphibian School Battalion. The aquatic demonstration was part of the Executive Leadership Development Program, a 10-month Department of Defense course that taught Weber and 45 teammates what it's like to be a war fighter during eight U.S. and foreign deployments, each one to two weeks long.

Weber, who fulfilled normal duties while participating in the Executive Leadership Development Program, has a Ph.D. in hypersonics and is a highly technical member of the management lead team in Air Vehicles.

As the chief technology advocate for the directorate, she leads a team of planners that picks the technologies for Air Vehicles to focus its research and development on, and sets goals for where the future of technology with regard to UAV, Sustainment and Space. She monitors the milestones that mark the movement of a technology. Weber is the juggler, assuring a balance of technology goals for the near, mid and long term future.

She also serves as senior adviser to the director and corporate board on all technology issues. @